

ADJC Victims' Rights Unit
INFORMATION BROCHURE:
Superintendent's Release Boards (SRB's)

General Information

A Superintendent's Release Board (SRB) is a hearing in which a juvenile in secure care goes before a Board to assess the youth's progress and determine if the youth should be released from secure care. The Board consists of ADJC staff familiar with the youth's treatment, and is facilitated by the institution's Superintendent (or Asst. Superintendent), who makes the final decision regarding whether a youth should be released or remain in the institution.

According to victims' rights laws, a registered victim has the right to be included in any hearing in which the youth is being considered for release. It is your right to attend the youth's SRB, and in doing so you will be provided an opportunity to give your feedback to the Board.

If you attend an SRB, you will be accompanied by a representative from the Victims' Rights Unit who will be able to guide you through the process.

Important Things to Know about SRB's

- SRB hearings are held in secure care facilities, where security is extremely important. You will need to bring a photo ID, and should not plan on bringing anything into the facility other than your keys and personal belongings. Please be advised that the security staff may refuse to allow some items into the facility.
- Dress can be casual, but should be appropriate for a secure care juvenile facility. Victims will not be allowed inside the facility if they are inappropriately dressed.
- Conduct should be similar to that of a court hearing. Aggressive, hostile behavior will result in the victim being removed from the SRB. Victims should understand the SRB process and how it works—while it is a place to voice your concerns and discuss how the crime impacted you, it is not appropriate to be confrontational toward the youth. If seeing the youth will be traumatic or provoking in any way, the victim should request that they speak to the Board without the youth being present.
- Face-to-face meetings with the youth, called "clarification sessions," can be arranged by the Victims' Rights Unit if both the victim and youth are willing and able to participate. Clarification sessions are structured meetings, facilitated by ADJC staff; typically there is a representative with the youth, and a Victims' Rights Specialist with the victim. Clarification sessions can impact both the victim and the youth in many positive ways, and can often promote healing and restoration for the victim. If you are interested in pursuing a clarification session, notify your Victims' Rights Specialist as early as possible.

SRB Procedures

- Prior to the SRB, a Victims' Rights Specialist (VRS) will contact you to discuss where you should meet, what time to be there, and other important information. Victims should be accompanied by a Victims' Rights Specialist at all times while inside a secure care facility.
- Once inside the institution, the VRS will check in with the facility staff and will wait with the victim for the SRB to begin. The victim typically will not see the youth face-to-face until the SRB hearing actually begins. Depending on the circumstances, some SRB's are conducted so that the victim and youth will not come in contact. As a victim, let the VRS know if you do not want to come in contact with the youth during the hearing.
- When the hearing begins, the VRS and victim will move into the hearing room. As noted above, the youth may or may not be in the room at this time. Introductions will be made, and typically the Superintendent will explain how the hearing will proceed.

- Each person at the SRB represents a different area from the youth's treatment program. Each person will have an opportunity to discuss the youth's progress while in the institution, and make a recommendation regarding the youth's release.
- When it is time to address victim-related issues and concerns, the Superintendent will give the victim an opportunity to address the Board. As a victim, this is your opportunity to make a statement regarding how the crime impacted you, your family members and/or community, etc.
- Once all of the representatives have spoken, the Superintendent will make their decision.

Decisions regarding release typically fall into three categories:

1. Approved—this means that the youth is approved for release from the institution.
2. Conditionally approved—this means that the youth is approved for release, but only on certain conditions. For example, a Superintendent may say that a youth is conditionally approved for release in 30 days IF the youth completes a certain assignment or meets certain conditions by that time.
3. Denied—this means that the youth is not approved for release at this time, and will have to appear before the Board at another SRB hearing. In the meantime, the youth will have clearly identified goals to accomplish prior to the next SRB.

Victim Input During the SRB

When a victim addresses the Board at an SRB hearing, the victim should focus their statements on how the crime affected them. Some common themes important to victims include:

- How the offense affected you and your family, including the emotional, financial, psychological, and other effects.
- Any concerns you have regarding safety, restitution, or other court orders.
- Any other issues that you think the Board needs to know to make their decision.
- Again, it is important to emphasize that the SRB is not a place for hostile confrontation, but a place for victims to be heard by voicing their concerns and discussing how the crime affected them.

Experiencing Healing and Restoration

One of the goals of the Victims' Rights Unit is to help facilitate healing and restoration for victims. What do victims need in order to recover? Only a victim can answer this question, and every victim's needs are different. In general, however, some common needs of crime victims include (but are not limited to):

- Compensation for losses;
- Information;
- Opportunities to express and validate their feelings (their hurt, anger, and pain);
- Assurance that this will not happen again, to them or anyone else;
- To know that steps are being taken to keep the community safe;
- Assurance that what happened to them was wrong, unfair, and undeserved;
- Opportunities to speak the truth of what happened to them, including their suffering;
- Victims need to be heard and affirmed.

Conclusion

SRB hearings can be an excellent opportunity to take an active role in your case and in the juvenile justice process. Victims' Rights Specialists are available to assist you and be an advocate for you as a victim. Please don't hesitate to contact the Victims' Rights Unit with any questions or concerns regarding your case.

Keep in mind that even if you do not want to attend the SRB yourself, you can request that a Victims' Rights Specialist attend on your behalf to address any of your concerns. Again, contact the Victims' Rights Unit if you have any questions or need further information.

For more information:

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